



保護海港協會有限公司

Society For Protection Of The Harbour Limited

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The Honourable Michael SUEN Ming-yeung, GBS, JP,
Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands,
Room 821, West Wing,
Central Government Offices,
Central, Hong Kong.

14th May 2005

Dear Sir,

**Re: Children's Illustrated Story Book
"The Adventures of Victoria"**

We refer to your recent public attacks on our above book through the news media and radio programmes attended by your Deputy Secretary (Planning & Lands) Mr. Thomas Tso. We were surprised that, despite our letter to you dated 22nd April 2005 setting out our explanations, you had seen fit to continue with such public attacks.

We also refer to your letter dated 27th April 2005 on which we have carried out further investigations and are now in the position to give you a detailed response as set out hereunder and in the enclosures hereto including our "Further Response to Government's 5 Complaints". These completely refute all your allegations and show conclusively that your present attack is completely unreasonable and cannot be justified. Such unwarranted attack is extremely unfair as it is misleading the public into believing that there is something seriously wrong with the book and which is entirely untrue.

Furthermore, it is also entirely inappropriate for you to threaten to write to the school principals. It is very unfair and improper for the Government to drag schools into the matter as it would put school principals and teachers into an impossible position faced with such a letter from the Government.

We are shocked and extremely disappointed that senior Government Officials should launch such an unwarranted and unjustifiable public attack on a children's story book.



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As you may know, our Society was formed ten years ago to protect and preserve Victoria Harbour. It is regrettable that to do so, we have had to oppose the Government's reclamation policy and even had to resort to the law courts to do so.

During this time, 584 hectares of reclamation had been gazetted and would have been committed, proceeded with, or even completed by now but for the opposition by our Society. Even the Court of Final Appeal in its judgment last year supported our work. We believe that we are and have been fulfilling a useful environmental protection function for Hong Kong.

In pursuance of our work, we have produced this book after eight months of hard work and at substantial expense in order to impress upon our young children the importance of protecting Hong Kong's environment and the harbour.

We can understand why some Government officials may be sensitive to some of the factual background and our comments and statements, but these facts are accurate and our comments and statements are made fairly. There is no material inaccuracy in the book even though the Government may disagree with our point of view and our conclusions.

The Government is of course free to present their point of view and explain their case to the public, but it is wrong and unreasonable for the Government Officials to claim that our Society is misleading the people only because they disagree with our point of view and our conclusions.

In order to have a speedy resolution of this dispute, at our request a number of respected community leaders have independently and objectively reviewed the book in the light of your criticisms. They have come to the conclusion that in their view "the story book is not misleading. The factual contents of the book are without any material inaccuracy and the comments and statements in it are fairly made. The Government's complaints are trivial and inconsequential."



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We list out in the following their names and titles and enclose herewith the form of letter that each of them have signed.

Mr. Edward Chan, S.C.

The Honourable Alan Leong

Professor Johannes Chan, S.C.

Ms. Gladys Li, S.C.

Dr. Robert T.Y. Chung

The Honourable Margaret Ng

The Honourable Dr. K.K. Kwok

Bishop Joseph Zen

We feel confident that an objective review by you will lead you to the same conclusions. If so, we rely upon your sense of justice to act fairly in order to undo the damage that has been caused to the publication and distribution of our book.

We refer to the well-researched article "How to lose a Harbour" published in the 2nd May 2005 issue of the internationally respected Time Magazine (copy enclosed) which fairly stated the devastating impact of the continuous reclamation over the past 160 years on the harbour. From this article it is clear that the Government's policy of reclaiming the harbour is demeaning Hong Kong in the eyes of the world.

We sincerely offer our best co-operation to your Government to protect and preserve the harbour in the true spirit of the Protection of the Harbour Ordinance and the Court of Final Appeal Judgment and to plan the future development of the harbourfront in the best interest of Hong Kong and for the benefit of our future generations.

Yours sincerely,

For Christine Loh,
Chairperson